

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

**METHOD FOR MANAGING RESOURCES ON A PER USER BASIS FOR
UNIX BASED SYSTEMS**

5

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Technical Field:

10 The present invention relates to the allocation of resources in a computer network. More specifically, the present invention relates to allocating resources based on user identification.

15 2. Description of Related Art:

On UNIX systems, network resources such as file systems, printers, and other peripheral devices must be attached at system initialization or later by an administrator. Optionally, the administrator may give 20 permission to users or groups of users to manually attach certain network resources to particular client computers within the network. However, this latter approach is cumbersome and is not generally used.

Administration of network resources must be done 25 physically on each machine from which users may need to access the resources, even if the users are remotely administered through a facility such as Network Information Services (NIS). As such, users do not have much flexibility in accessing network resources from 30 multiple client stations.

Therefore, a method which allows central control of resource allocation for all users and permits users to

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1
access their particular resource needs from any client
within the network would be desirable.

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a method for managing
5 resources in a computer network based on user identity.
A configuration file defining specific resources is
created for each network user. When a user logs in on a
client computer, an attachment program matches the user
identification with the user's configuration file and
10 then attaches the resources listed within the file. When
the user logs out, the program unattaches the resources,
resetting the client back to its original state before
login. This approach allows users to access their
individual resource configurations from any client in the
15 network.

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The novel features believed characteristic of the
5 invention are set forth in the appended claims. The
invention itself, however, as well as a preferred mode of
use, further objectives and advantages thereof, will best
be understood by reference to the following detailed
description of an illustrative embodiment when read in
10 conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 depicts a pictorial representation of a
distributed data processing system in which the present
invention may be implemented;

Figure 2 depicts a block diagram of a data
15 processing system which may be implemented as a server in
accordance with the present invention;

Figure 3, a block diagram of a data processing
system in which the present invention may be implemented
is illustrated; and

20 **Figure 4** depicts a flowchart illustrating a method
for managing network resources on a per user basis in
accordance with the present invention.

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

With reference now to the figures, and in particular
5 with reference to **Figure 1**, a pictorial representation of
a distributed data processing system is depicted in which
the present invention may be implemented.

Distributed data processing system 100 is a network
of computers in which the present invention may be
10 implemented. Distributed data processing system 100
contains network 102, which is the medium used to provide
communications links between various devices and
computers connected within distributed data processing
system 100. Network 102 may include permanent
15 connections, such as wire or fiber optic cables, or
temporary connections made through telephone connections.
In the depicted example, server 104 is connected to
network 102, along with storage unit 106. In addition,
clients 108, 110 and 112 are also connected to network
20 102. These clients, 108, 110 and 112, may be, for
example, personal computers or network computers.

For purposes of this application, a network computer
is any computer coupled to a network that receives a
program or other application from another computer
25 coupled to the network. In the depicted example, server
104 provides data, such as boot files, operating system
images and applications, to clients 108-112. Clients
108, 110 and 112 are clients to server 104. Distributed
data processing system 100 may include additional
30 servers, clients, and other devices not shown.
Distributed data processing system 100 also includes
printers 114, 116 and 118. A client, such as client 110,

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

may print directly to printer 114. Clients such as client 108 and client 112 do not have directly attached printers. These clients may print to printer 116, which is attached to server 104, or to printer 118, which is a

- 5 network printer that does not require connection to a computer for printing documents. Client 110, alternatively, may print to printer 116 or printer 118, depending on the printer type and the document requirements.

10 In the depicted example, distributed data processing system 100 is the Internet, with network 102 representing a worldwide collection of networks and gateways that use the TCP/IP suite of protocols to communicate with one another. At the heart of the Internet is a backbone of
15 high-speed data communication lines between major nodes or host computers consisting of thousands of commercial, government, education, and other computer systems that route data and messages. Of course, distributed data processing system 100 also may be implemented as a number
20 of different types of networks such as, for example, an intranet or a local area network.

Figure 1 is intended as an example and not as an architectural limitation for the processes of the present invention.

25 Referring to Figure 2, a block diagram of a data processing system which may be implemented as a server, such as server 104 in Figure 1, is depicted in accordance with the present invention. Data processing system 200 may be a symmetric multiprocessor (SMP) system including
30 a plurality of processors 202 and 204 connected to system bus 206. Alternatively, a single processor system may be employed. Also connected to system bus 206 is memory

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1
controller/cache 208, which provides an interface to local memory 209. I/O bus bridge 210 is connected to system bus 206 and provides an interface to I/O bus 212. Memory controller/cache 208 and I/O bus bridge 210 may be 5 integrated as depicted.

Peripheral component interconnect (PCI) bus bridge 214 connected to I/O bus 212 provides an interface to PCI local bus 216. A number of modems 218-220 may be connected to PCI bus 216. Typical PCI bus 10 implementations will support four PCI expansion slots or add-in connectors. Communications links to network computers 108-112 in Figure 1 may be provided through modem 218 and network adapter 220 connected to PCI local bus 216 through add-in boards.

15 Additional PCI bus bridges 222 and 224 provide interfaces for additional PCI buses 226 and 228, from which additional modems or network adapters may be supported. In this manner, server 200 allows connections to multiple network computers. A memory mapped graphics 20 adapter 230 and hard disk 232 may also be connected to I/O bus 212 as depicted, either directly or indirectly.

Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the hardware depicted in Figure 2 may vary. For example, other peripheral devices, such as optical disk 25 drives and the like, also may be used in addition to or in place of the hardware depicted. The depicted example is not meant to imply architectural limitations with respect to the present invention.

The data processing system depicted in Figure 2 may 30 be, for example, an IBM RS/6000, a product of International Business Machines Corporation in Armonk, New York, running the UNIX operating system.

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

With reference now to **Figure 3**, a block diagram of a data processing system in which the present invention may be implemented is illustrated. Data processing system 300 is an example of a client computer. Data processing system 300 employs a peripheral component interconnect (PCI) local bus architecture. Although the depicted example employs a PCI bus, other bus architectures, such as Micro Channel and ISA, may be used. Processor 302 and main memory 304 are connected to PCI local bus 306 through PCI bridge 308. PCI bridge 308 may also include an integrated memory controller and cache memory for processor 302.

Additional connections to PCI local bus 306 may be made through direct component interconnection or through add-in boards. In the depicted example, local area network (LAN) adapter 310, SCSI host bus adapter 312, and expansion bus interface 314 are connected to PCI local bus 306 by direct component connection. In contrast, audio adapter 316, graphics adapter 318, and audio/video adapter (A/V) 319 are connected to PCI local bus 306 by add-in boards inserted into expansion slots. Expansion bus interface 314 provides a connection for a keyboard and mouse adapter 320, modem 322, and additional memory 324. In the depicted example, SCSI host bus adapter 312 provides a connection for hard disk drive 326, tape drive 328, CD-ROM drive 330, and digital video disc read only memory drive (DVD-ROM) 332. Typical PCI local bus implementations will support three or four PCI expansion slots or add-in connectors.

An operating system runs on processor 302 and is used to coordinate and provide control of various components within data processing system 300 in **Figure 3**.

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

The operating system may be a commercially available operating system, such as UNIX. An object oriented programming system, such as Java, may run in conjunction with the operating system, providing calls to the 5 operating system from Java programs or applications executing on data processing system 300. Instructions for the operating system, the object-oriented operating system, and applications or programs are located on a storage device, such as hard disk drive 326, and may be 10 loaded into main memory 304 for execution by processor 302.

Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the hardware in **Figure 3** may vary depending on the implementation. For example, other peripheral devices, 15 such as optical disk drives and the like, may be used in addition to or in place of the hardware depicted in **Figure 3**. The depicted example is not meant to imply architectural limitations with respect to the present invention. For example, the processes of the present 20 invention may be applied to multiprocessor data processing systems.

Referring now to **Figure 4**, a flowchart illustrating a method for managing network resources on a per user basis is depicted in accordance with the present 25 invention. The present invention allows users to access an individualized configuration of network resources from any client within the network, rather than limiting the configuration to one particular client.

The process begins by booting the machine (**step 30 401**). Next, a resource attachment program is initiated when a user identification is entered during login (**step 402**). This attachment program can be stored either on a

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

client or a network server. The resource attachment program matches the user identity with a particular configuration file (**step 403**) and then reads the contents of the configuration file (**step 404**). The configuration
5 file contains a list of all the network resources that a user may access. These resources can include, for example, file systems, printers, disk drives, serial devices, peripheral devices, and any other shared hardware or software. The contents of the configuration
10 file can be set and changed by a network administrator. The configuration file is read from a well known location, such as a network server.

The resource attachment program uses the information in the configuration file to attach the authorized
15 resources (**step 405**). After the individual configuration of resources has been attached to the client, the attachment program creates a record containing a list of all successfully attached resources (**step 406**). This attachment record allows the attachment program to keep
20 track of which resources have been attached to the client during a particular user session, and can be stored in either the client or a network server.

When the session on the client is finished, the user simply enters a routine logout command (**step 407**). The
25 resources attachment program then unattaches the resources listed in the attachment record created in **step 406** (**step 408**). After the resources are unattached, the program deletes the contents of the attachment record
(step 409), setting the client back to the original state
30 before the user logged in at **step 401**.

The present invention allows for a single point of control of resource definitions for all users on a given

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

network. This permits users to log in to any client in the network and still access their individually defined resources, independent of how that particular client has been configured, which reduces the amount of

5 configuration required on a per machine basis. In addition, the present invention attaches only the subset of resources actually required by the user, reducing total system usage at any one time.

It should be pointed out that although the present
10 invention has been described within the context of a UNIX based computer system, the concepts embodied in the present invention can be applied to other operating systems.

It is important to note that while the present
15 invention has been described in the context of a fully functioning data processing system, those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the processes of the present invention are capable of being distributed in the form of a computer readable medium of instructions
20 and a variety of forms and that the present invention applies equally regardless of the particular type of signal bearing media actually used to carry out the distribution. Examples of computer readable media include recordable-type media, such as a floppy disk, a
25 hard disk drive, a RAM, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, and transmission-type media, such as digital and analog communications links, wired or wireless communications links using transmission forms, such as, for example, radio frequency and light wave transmissions. The
30 computer readable media may take the form of coded formats that are decoded for actual use in a particular data processing system.

The description of the present invention has been

Docket No.AUS9-2000-0486-US1

presented for purposes of illustration and description,
and is not intended to be exhaustive or limited to the
invention in the form disclosed. Many modifications and
variations will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in
5 the art. The embodiment was chosen and described in
order to best explain the principles of the invention,
the practical application, and to enable others of
ordinary skill in the art to understand the invention for
various embodiments with various modifications as are
10 suited to the particular use contemplated.

RECORDED IN U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
RECEIVED MAR 10 2000
SEARCHED
INDEXED
FILED
MAILED